

Title: Alleged illegal eviction of tribal settlers in Pandalur Taluk of Gudalur district in Tamil Nadu.

SHRI ABDULLAKUTTY (CANNANORE): Sir, I invite the attention of this House to the most serious problem that has arisen in Pandalur taluk of Gudalur district in the State of Tamil Nadu.

About 25,000 farmers' families which had settled there for decades are being evicted by the Forest Department, calling them 'encroachers'. The fact of the matter is that these farmers had been there for several decades, since the time of their forefathers. They have ration cards, electricity connections, telephone facilities and also identity cards issued by the Election Commission of India.

Former Member of Parliament of India, Shri S. Ramachandran Pillai and I visited these villages last year. The issue is very serious. Many years ago, the former Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, veteran leader, Shri A.K. Gopalan had himself struggled for the cause of the farmers of this area, to secure their rights. I request that the Government should take a sympathetic view of the problem being faced by these settlers of Gudalur District and immediately send a team of Members of Parliament to Gudalur District to verify the facts of the issue and to help the farmers of Gudalur District.

SHRI K. FRANCIS GEORGE (IDUKKI): Sir, I associate myself with what the hon. Member has expressed.